

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Yelshanka Natural Gas
and Industrial Installations

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- A fairly large industrial area is being built up around the natural gas region in Yelshanka, a village composed of an old and a new section, approximately 18 km west of Saratov on the Saratov-Atkarsk road.

Gasoprovod

- All installations and plans directly connected with the mining of natural gas near Saratov and the Saratov-Moscow natural gas line are called Gasoprovod.
- The natural gas wells, as far as informant could survey from Camp No 7238/12, are located north of the Saratov-Atkarsk road, and beginning near Yelshanka extend over an area at least 10 km long. The region could be larger, as informant had no opportunity to determine the size personally. The compressor station, a three-building complex with a small repair shop, lies one km north of the old section of Yelshanka and approximately 500 m northwest of the PW camp.
- Construction of the Saratov-Moscow gas line must have been completed some time ago. When informant arrived in Yelshanka in mid-1947, the compressor station was already in existence. Work was still being done on the opening of natural gas wells and was far from completion in the summer of 1949.
- There are approximately 50-60 natural gas wells in groups of two's and three's. Gas is conducted in pipe lines to the compressor station where, by a reduction of pressure, it is sent on its way in long-distance pipe lines. A main pipe line extends toward Saratov and at the overpass near the Autobasa runs aboveground at bridge level over the railroad bed. The pipes have an inside width of about 40 cm and a pipe thickness of 1 cm. The pipes are sometimes 12 m long. They are welded together on the ground and in lengths of several hundred meters are dragged by tractors into ditches prepared for them. Pipe lines were no longer being laid in summer 1949.
- Special American Mack machines are used for concreting gas probes. Very fluid concrete is sprayed under pressure into the hole which has been drilled, thereby forming a thin coat and solidifying. There are a number of Mack machines, which move about over the drilling area. When the well has been drilled and opened, the tower built over the well is sometimes torn down,

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and a small building containing pipe contact mechanism with gasometers is built over the well.

7. Only the compressor station is guarded, but eventually other mechanical installations will be under guard. Women are employed as guards in the daytime and at night men armed with carbines.

Railroad and Switch Yard

8. The yard was originally built to aid in the construction of Gasoprovod, but it is now used for unloading building materials needed for the erection of other installations around Yelshanka. The railroad yard has one spur which branches off to the north from the Saratov-Atkarsk main railroad line two to three kilometers before the new section of Yelshanka, runs on an overpass over the main highway Saratov-Atkarsk and into a depressed area which has several sidings. A second spur branches off between the overpass and the railroad yard in the direction of the MVD storage depot. In the loading area are large numbers of gas line pipes, building materials, coal, prefabricated plywood huts, and tractors.
9. A switchyard on the Saratov-Atkarsk main railroad line is three km from New Yelshanka and several hundred meters beyond the highway bridge over the railroad. The yard is used to supply the Junkers Factory site.

Junkers Factory

10. The Junkers Factory site is located in a trapezoid-shaped area, bounded on the north by the Saratov-Atkarsk highway, on the west by the Saratov-Atkarsk rail line, and on the east by a side road which branches off the main highway in a southward direction at a point opposite the Autobasa.
11. The complex is being built to house a dismantled Junkers factory. The iron construction work on the large buildings was completed for the most part in the summer of 1949, as far as informant could see from the Autobasa where he was working. Several buildings appeared to be ready for work on inside furnishings. Informant saw 2½ and 3-ton dump trucks carry 850 truckloads of mixed concrete in a period of eight hours.

Saratov-Atkarsk Road

12. The Saratov-Atkarsk road was still being reconstructed in the summer of 1949. The former road surface is being replaced by a concrete surface on a foundation of sand and broken stones. Informant could observe the construction work only from the Autobasa and the area in which he lived.

Other Installations Near Yelshanka

13. In New Yelshanka is an engineering school, a large depot located on the northern edge of New Yelshanka, and an MVD supply storage depot northeast of the large depot.
14. A settlement inhabited by personnel of Autobasa and RMC workshops is located north of the highway and several hundred meters beyond the highway bridge.
15. A large industrial area is located along the 10 km of highway toward Saratov, including a glass factory under construction and the Saratov Tractor Factory No. 306, from which the Autobasa received its roller-moving machinery for heavy chassis.
16. The Autobasa, a tractor repair shop, is located about 10 kilometers west of the center of Saratov and north of the Saratov-Atkarsk highway.*
17. The RMC Workshops are located north of the Saratov-Atkarsk road and are separated from the Autobasa by a saw mill.*

Attachment: Sketch of Yelshanka Area

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